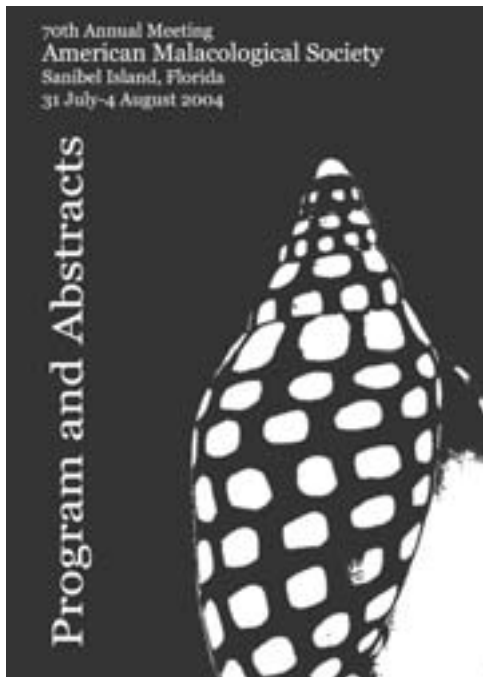


Shell Museum News

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Summer 2004



Museum Survives Hurricane Charley, Two Others

Southwest Florida triskaidekaphobics may be the only people not surprised when category 4 Hurricane Charley slammed into the region on the afternoon of Friday, Aug. 13. What was a category 2 hurricane heading north of Tampa just a few hours earlier suddenly became the first hurricane to devastate much of interior Southwest Florida and its barrier islands since Hurricane Donna in 1960.

"Miraculously," reported Museum director Dr. José H. Leal, "the physical damage to the Museum was minimal. In addition to the large number of fallen trees and damage to the sign in the parking lot, the building itself lost only drainpipes and gutters. The metal roof of the tall building resisted the very strong wind gusts associated with the hurricane.

Even the animals in the live tank were still alive!"

The Museum closed Aug. 12, because of the City of Sanibel's mandatory evacuation order. The island reopened to residents, business owners, and contractors Aug. 18. The island was to reopen to visitors Sept. 3, but that was delayed because of Hurricane Frances. It hit eastern Florida on Labor Day weekend and became Tropical Storm Frances in Southwest Florida, passing by with minimal damage. Slow-moving Hurricane Ivan gave the region another scare the next week, before it turned westward.

The Museum is grateful to all who have donated and continue to donate to its Emergency Operating Fund.

AMS Meeting: A Great Success!

"It's so wonderful to finally be able to meet in person the scientists with whom I've been corresponding over the past six years!" said Tina Yorgey during the 70th Annual Meeting of the American Malacological Society.

Mrs. Yorgey, assistant to Museum director and AMS president Dr. José H. Leal, was instrumental in setting up the July 31 to Aug. 4 conference, which had
(continued on page 3)

Remembering Edie Mugridge

The Museum lost one of its earliest and dedicated supporters when long-time Sanibel resident and shell shop owner Edith H. "Edie" Mugridge passed away at age 98 on April 8, 2004.

Ms. Mugridge served on the board of trustees from 1988 to 1990. She then began volunteering three days a week to help catalogue the proposed Museum's ever-increasing donations of shell collections.

During the late 1980s, she had temporarily stored shell collections and books for the Museum library in the garage of her Glory of the Sea shop at 2431 Periwinkle Way. After closing the shop, her generosity enabled the Shell Museum Preview Center to open rent-free in the former storefront area in April 1993. The Preview Center was housed there for two years, until the opening of
(continued on page 2)

From The Director

My one-year tenure as president of the American Malacological Society ended this month. It was a great honor to have served my term and a privilege to have hosted the 70th Annual Meeting of AMS. The event took place from July 31 to Aug. 4 and had as its main venue the

Sundial Beach Resort right here on Sanibel Island.

As usual for a meeting of this kind, the presentations covered a wide gamut of subjects in malacology. Two symposia, however, galvanized the attention of the local community and media. The first, titled "Coastal Molluscan

Assemblages as Environmental Indicators and Monitors of Restoration Efficiency" (convened by our neighbors Drs. Michael Savarese, Aswany Volety, and Greg Tolley, from Florida Gulf Coast University), explored shallow-water marine mollusks as gauges of
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"Under The Sea"
Fund-Raiser

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changes in the environment, sort of like mine canaries of yore.

Another popular session was "Snails and Slugs as Agricultural and Horticultural Pests" (organized by Dr. David G. Robinson of the U. S. Department of Agriculture); the participants, mostly from government agencies in charge of pest control, looked at land mollusks introduced from other regions in the world as a potential source of ecological and economic threats.

The meeting was co-sponsored by a number of local and national organizations. I want, however, to extend special thanks for the unlimited assistance provided by The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum. The board of trustees, its president Jon L. Thompson, volunteers, and staff of the Museum have been, in many and diverse ways, fully supportive of the choice of our organization as the host institution of this unique event.

In addition, we received generous financial support for the full printing of the meeting's book of program and abstracts from the Lee County Tourist Development Council. Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau executive director D.T. Minich embraced our cause and acted swiftly to find the necessary funds. The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club, Inc., always ready to help, liberally sponsored the bulk of the social events taking place during the meeting.

The ever-popular malacological auction broke records in volume of items and income (proceeds of the auction help maintain the AMS student endowment fund). Field trips took participants to a fossil pit in Sarasota, the J. N. Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge, and Cayo Costa State Park.

I want to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the local organizing committee for the 70th Annual Meeting of the American Malacological Society. The event could not have happened without the consistent help from Rodger Bunnell, Debbie Frederick, Jon Greenlaw, Libby Grimm, Anne Joffe, Pat Jones, Ted McLean, Kim Nealon, Marilyn Northrop, Hal Pilcher and, especially, the mainstay of this entire effort, my assistant Tina Yorgey.

From the comments I heard after the meeting, I am positive the event fulfilled our highest expectations of disseminating and acquiring cutting-edge malacological information. And we made it before Hurricane Charley!



José H. Leal, Ph.D.
Director

Mugridge...from page 1

the Museum.

In addition, Ms. Mugridge made an apartment on her property available for use by Museum founding director Dr. R. Tucker Abbott until his death in November 1995. When director Dr. José H. Leal was hired in February of 1996, he stayed in the apartment during the work week for about six months, while commuting to his family in Miami on weekends.

"I have always been grateful to Edie for allowing the Museum to use part of her property, and for being a staunch supporter of the Museum mission since the very beginning," Dr. Leal noted.

Because Edie dedicated so much of her time and energy to the Museum, her many friends established the Edith H. Mugridge Library Fund in her honor in the summer of 1996, after she turned 90 years old. The fund was used for the enrichment of the collection of books and periodicals in the Museum library, and artist Sue Stephens designed a shell-motif bookplate for each volume purchased by the fund.

In a Museum newsletter feature on her in September 1996, Ms. Mugridge was quoted as saying, "Our dreams originally for The Shell Museum were very modest. We thought we could find a house somewhere and just put some shells in it. I am very proud to have played a part in seeing it come to fruition. It is important to expose young people to the beauty and importance of our natural environment."

A teacher by training, Ms. Mugridge first visited Sanibel in 1951 and moved to the island a decade later. She opened her shell shop the next year. During the next several decades, until her eyesight failed, she traveled throughout the world, often with other shell collectors.

In 1999, a new *Terebra*, *Terebra mugridgeae*, was named for her by Dr. Emilio Garcia, a retired professor from the University of Louisiana. Dr. Garcia met Ms. Mugridge in 1965 and joined her on many of her travels.

Upon her death, he wrote an eloquent tribute in the Spring 2004 issue of *The Junonia*, the newsletter of the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club. He concluded by noting that "Edie was a perfect traveling companion, always wanting to



Edie Mugridge is shown with Museum director Dr. José H. Leal in 1997. The occasion was the Conchologists of America annual convention held on Captiva at South Seas Resort and Plantation.
Photo: Fay Mucha

see what was beyond the beaten track, always thoughtful, always caring, never complaining. More importantly, she was a great and loyal friend from the first day, and I miss her."

Reminiscences, to be read at a celebration of the life of Edith H. "Edie" Mugridge, may be sent to her niece, Dee Coughlin, 94 Old Quarry Drive, Weymouth, MA 02188. The afternoon gathering, open to the public, will be Nov. 13 at Beachview Restaurant on Sanibel.

Shells Online



Pictures of the micromollusk *Cyclostremiscus beaulti* (12mm), from Sanibel Island, have recently been added to the Southwest Florida Shells online guide (www.shellmuseum.org/sanibel_shells.html).

Photo: José H. Leal

Museum Fund- Raiser March 6th



While marking March 3, 4, and 5 on your 2005 calendar as the dates for the annual Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club Show and Fair, be sure to also mark Sunday, March 6! That's the date of "Under the Sea," an evening fund-raiser to benefit the Museum. It will be held under a tent on the Museum grounds.

"There will be dinner, dancing, entertainment, a silent auction, oral auction, raffle, and lots of surprises," says trustee and event chairwoman Anne Joffe. "Tickets are an affordable \$75. We are looking for sponsors and items for both auctions and the raffle, and for volunteers to help with the fund-raiser." Mrs. Joffe can be reached by calling 239/472-3151.

Artist Kimberly Nealon, who works at the Museum front desk, designed the "Under the Sea" logo shown above. Look for further information on the event in the next issue of *Shell Museum News*.

AMS...from page 1

as its base the Sundial Beach Resort on Sanibel.

Museum staff, volunteers, and Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club members also helped Mrs. Yorgey get ready for the meeting during the course of the past year. The conference was deemed a great success after 174 informational welcome bags were handed out at the registration table to scientists, Museum volunteers, and members of the press.

Dr. Leal designed the striking logo for the cover of the book of program and abstracts, which he edited, with the assistance of Mrs. Yorgey and Museum public relations manager Libby Grimm. Its publication was paid for with a grant from the Lee County Tourist Development Council Events Marketing program. The logo also adorned the welcome bags and T-shirts.

Sundial Beach Resort's hardworking and friendly staff ensured that the event ran without a hitch. A grant from the Shell Club underwrote the costs of food and beverages at the beachside welcome party and the open house held at the Museum.

The meeting's success was reinforced when new AMS president Dianna Padilla told the *Island Sun* newspaper: "Dr. Leal has done an outstanding job. He not only put together an excellent event, but nice opportunities for social interaction. The Museum is a marvelous place for education, and he's really developed it."

Museum News

In addition to presiding over the 70th Annual Meeting of the American Malacological Society, Museum director Dr. José H. Leal recently attended two other conferences. "Sun, Fun and Shells!" was the theme of the 33rd annual convention of the Conchologists of America, held June 26 to July 2 in Tampa. Dr. Leal was invited to be the keynote speaker at the ninth annual meeting of the Sociedad Mexicana de Malacología y Conchiliología. It was held Sept. 21-24 in Mérida, Yucatán, México. His topic was, "La Biología de los moluscos de aguas profundas" ("The Biology of Deep-Sea Mollusks"). He also gave a presentation titled, "The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum: A Success Story."

The Museum is again participating in J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge's annual celebration week. Dr. Leal will give a talk at the Museum on Oct. 14 titled, "The Seashells of Southwest Florida." Public relations manager Libby Grimm will staff a Museum information table at the refuge during "Ding" Darling Day on Oct. 16.

Dr. Leal will be the kickoff speaker for the 2004-2005 season of the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club. The first meeting is scheduled on Oct. 26 at the Museum.

The Museum Outreach Program is up and running, under the direction of Mrs. Nyquist and education docent Ginny Avery, and aided by six additional education docents. Since January, they have visited eight assisted living facilities in Lee County, whose residents are unable to travel to the Museum. At each facility, the docents give an overview of the Museum, set up hands-on tables, and, if possible, present a slide show. Activity directors reported that the outreach program "was very well planned for our special population" and "the residents are still talking about it!"

In July, education docents hosted two large groups from the Visitor Services department of the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau. The groups were comprised of people who volunteer as information specialists at the VCB kiosk at Southwest Florida International Airport in Fort Myers. The docents are also looking forward to a busy season of schoolchildren visiting on field trips, including those funded under the Museum Adopt-A-Class program. Repeat bookings of adult tours already include several Elderhostel groups from Barry University of Miami Shores.

Before they left Sanibel for the summer, longtime Museum education docents Lowell and Dotty DeVasure had a fun time helping a crew film part of a children's video on their beachfront property. A few local preschoolers should also be making brief appearances in *B is for Beach, Let's Build a Sandcastle*, which will be available in the spring of 2005. The video is part of the Go Babies series from Alphabet Road, a company owned by Kate Wood and her son Burke Wood. Kate Wood's mother-in-law was Ruth Wood, the first wife of J. Howard Wood. For four generations, the Wood family has enjoyed Sanibel and its shells.

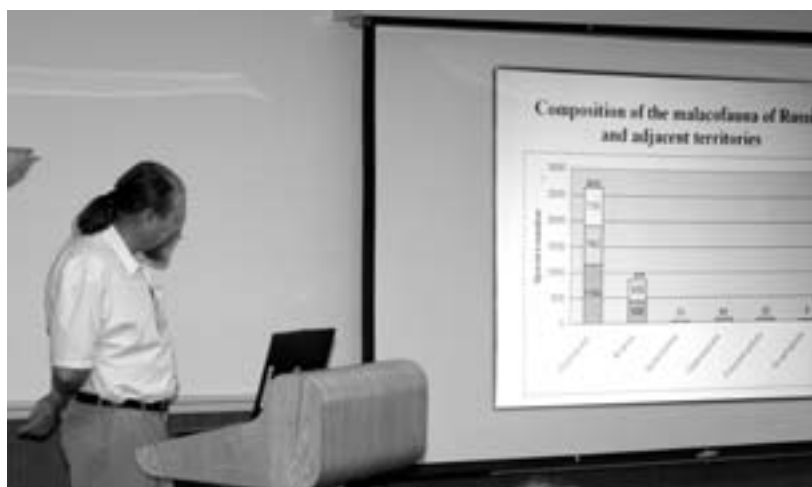
School shell collection kit volunteer Vera Goldstein hosted a lunchtime party in the Museum kitchen early in the summer. The occasion was to celebrate having packed and shipped the Museum's 2000th kit, which went to an elementary school in North Augusta, Georgia. Mrs. Goldstein is pleased that news of the kits continues to spread around the world via word of mouth and the Museum Web site. When she last revised the school shell collection kit order information sheet

(continued on page 6)

American Malacological Society 70th Annual Meeting 31 July - 4 August, 2004 Sanibel Island, Florida USA



1. Alan Kohn delivers the keynote lecture. 2. Rüdiger Bieler, Paul Valentich-Scott, and Paula Mikkelsen share some thoughts. 3. Yuri Kantor presents his paper. 4. Sundial I room. 5. The opening session. 6. Bob Bullock, Carole Hickman, and Roland Anderson talk during a coffee break.



American Malacological Society 70th Annual Meeting
31 July - 4 August, 2004 Sanibel Island, Florida USA



1. José H. Leal, Libby Grimm, Debbie Frederick, and Tina Yorgey celebrate at the Museum open house. 2. Bob Prezant, Jim McLean, Paul Callomon, and Jerry Harasewych enjoy the welcome reception at the Sundial Resort. 3. Wilfredo Garcia and David G. Robinson at the Museum.



4. Past presidents of the American Malacological Society, Bob Bullock and Diarmaid Ó Foighil share a laugh during the meeting's welcome reception. 5. Marta deMaintenon, Anne Joffe, and Carole Hickman at the Museum. 6. Gerhard Steiner, Roland Anderson, John Wilk, and Anna Bass at Sundial.





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in December 2001, the Museum had sent out about 1,600 kits to schools in every state and as far away as Russia, South Africa, American Samoa, and the Marshall Islands.

During the past several months, readers of *Tropicalia*, the Sunday magazine of the Fort Myers News-Press, have been repeatedly treated to eye-catching layouts of photographs of items from

the Museum Store. Reporter and photographer Joanna Hogan spent several hours meeting with store manager Patricia Jones and learning about the store's unusual molluscan and nautical wares.

The federal Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded the Museum a 2004 Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) grant. The award allows conservator Catharine Hawks of Falls Church, Virginia, to assess the Museum collection from Oct. 3 through Oct. 5. She will present her report by Dec. 5. Dr. Leal agrees with Heritage Preservation, which administers the award, that CAP "provides a wonderful opportunity for the Museum to receive professional assistance in examining its conservation needs."

Collection and research department volunteer Linda Kramer is the Museum liaison with Sanibel Public Library's inaugural "Sanibel Reads" campaign, scheduled to run from November 2004 to April 2005. The city-wide reading and discussion program encourages resident and visiting children and adults to read the same books at the same times. In winter, the Museum will host a discussion or other event pertaining to *Small Wonder*, a collection of essays by Barbara Kingsolver. The nationally known author is a frequent visitor to Sanibel and one of her essays is about shelling.

The Museum has lost five dedicated supporters. **Nan Baer**, of Captiva, was an early volunteer and fund raiser. **Joel Brown**, 20, was one of the Museum's first junior docents while he was attending The Sanibel School and Cypress Lake

Middle School in Fort Myers. Longtime collector **Janet Paddison** had recently donated her shells and accompanying data to the Museum. **Esther Shreve Ruffin**, 93, was the Museum's second-oldest volunteer and enthusiastically enjoyed her position as a Sunday afternoon docent in the Great Hall of Shells. **H. Welles Steane** was a life member and husband of former trustee Melanie Steane.

The Museum wishes to thank the following donors who recently contributed \$1,000 or more in designated and undesignated funds: the Arts & Attractions Donor Advised Fund of the Southwest Florida Community Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Avery, the Estate of Doris Barton, Ms. Susan P. Combest, the Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs, Mrs. Anina Hills Glaize, Mr. James A. Hartman, the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services, Dr. Harry G. Lee, the Lee County Tourist Development Council Events Marketing program, Mr. J. R. H. Lightbourn, Mrs. Edith W. MacGuire, and Mr. and Mrs. G. D. Penisten.



Museum trustee Dr. Harry G. Lee, of Jacksonville, Florida, an avid researcher of Florida micromollusks, recently visited the collection department. Dr. Lee continues to contribute funds to enable the department to purchase much-needed equipment.

Photo: José H. Leal

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